

BEFORE  
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
DOCKET NO. 94-172-C - ORDER NO. 94-515  
JUNE 3, 1994

IN RE: Request of TDS Telecom on behalf of	)	ORDER
McClellanville, Norway, St. Stephen,	)	APPROVING
and Williston Telephone Companies for	)	TARIFF
Approval of Optional Extended Calling	)	FILING
Plans Known as TDS Telecom Plus.	)	

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the Commission) by way of tariff filings on March 16, 1994, by TDS Telecom (TDS Telecom or the Company) on behalf of McClellanville, Norway, St. Stephen, and Williston Telephone Companies for approval of an optional expanded area calling plan known as TDS Telecom Plus ("TDS T+").

By letter dated April 7, 1994, the Commission's Executive Director instructed TDS Telecom to publish, one time, a prepared Notice of Filing in newspapers of general circulation in the areas affected by the Company's tariff filings. The Notice of Filing indicated the nature of the proceedings and advised all interested parties of the manner and time to file the appropriate pleadings for participation in these proceedings. The Company submitted affidavits indicating it had complied with these instructions. No Petitions to Intervene or letters of protest were received by the Commission.

The "TDS T+" plans are optional calling plans which provide seven digit calling to all exchanges located within a forty (40)

mile radius of each company's respective toll rate centers and located within the same Local Access Transport Area (LATA). The cost of the "TDS T+" plan includes a monthly line charge plus usage charges. The usage charges for calls within the Basic Service Area (BSA) are \$0.02 per minute and for calls in the Expanded Service Area (ESA) are \$0.11 per minute. The "TDS T+" plan also provides for time of day discounts. Additional options are also available for subscribers which will allow subscribers to purchase additional discounts for the "TDS T+" plan. Additionally, residential customers may select a flat rate option which will allow unlimited calling in the BSA and ESA for \$30.00 plus the "TDS T+" monthly line charge.

The Commission, upon examination of the tariff filing and the record in this case, believes, and so finds, that TDS Telecom's tariff filings should be approved. The "TDS T+" is similar to the extended area calling plan approved for Pond Branch Telephone Company in Commission Order No. 94-400 dated May 6, 1994, in Docket No. 93-750-C.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The "TDS T+" plan as filed by TDS Telecom on behalf of McClellanville, Norway, St. Stephen, and Williston Telephone Companies is an optional 40-mile, 7-digit calling plan. The Companies residential and business customers subscribing to the "TDS T+" plan will be able to make 7-digit calls to exchanges extending 40 miles from the Awendaw exchange in the case of McClellanville, 40 miles from the Norway exchange in the case of Norway, 40 miles from the Bonneau exchange in the case of St.

Stephen, 40 miles from the Williston exchange in the case of Williston, and 40 miles from the North exchange in the case of North. The "TDS T+" plan has two important components, the Basic Service Area (BSA) and the Expanded Service Area (ESA). The BSA is an area in which telephone service is furnished under a specific schedule of exchange rates and coincides with the current calling scope. The ESA is an area beyond the BSA and within a 40 mile radius, and within the same LATA, of the exchanges listed above for each telephone company.

2. The rates for the "TDS T+" depend upon which option is selected by the customer. Each of the new residential options has a monthly line charge of \$8.00. The rates for customer dialed local service are \$0.02 per minute in the BSA and \$0.11 per minute in the ESA. Charges for BSA usage are capped at \$15.00 for residence Individual Line Service. Time of day discounts are available for calls in the ESA. Additionally, customers may pay a fee of \$2.00 per month and receive a 20% discount to all usage in the ESA, or customers may choose to pay \$30.00 per month for unlimited usage in the BSA and ESA.

Business Individual Line customers have a monthly line charge of \$33.00 per month, and calling usage within the BSA is capped at \$25.00. Time of day discounts are available for calls in the ESA, and business customers may also choose the 20% discount for ESA usage for \$3.00 per month or may choose a 50% discount on ESA usage for all time periods for \$20.00 per month. Business customers do not have a flat rated option.

The "TDS T+" plan is also offered to Private Branch Exchange

(PBX), Key System, Public Telephone Access, and Centrex customers.

3. The Commission finds approval of the "TDS T+" plan to be in the public interest.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. TDS Telecom, and its South Carolina companies of McClellanville Telephone Company, Norway Telephone Company, St. Stephen Telephone Company, and Williston Telephone Company, are public utilities within the meaning of S.C. Code Ann. §58-9-10(6) (1976). Consequently, TDS Telecom's intrastate operations are subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission.

2. In approving the "TDS T+" plan, the Commission has exercised its power and discretion granted by S.C. Code Ann. §58-3-140 and §58-9-250 to reclassify this calling traffic as local service. In approving, the "TDS T+" plan, the Commission has considered the positive impact to customers in ease of use and in reducing rates, as well as the optional nature of the plan. The Commission has also taken notice of complaints concerning limited calling scopes and of requests for Extended Area Service (EAS) in the areas affected by this tariff filing. The Commission believes and concludes that approval of the "TDS T+" plan will alleviate complaints and EAS pressure in these areas and will benefit the public. The Commission believes the "TDS T+" plan will benefit subscribers by integrating these service areas with nearby metropolitan areas. The Commission also concludes that the benefits of "TDS T+" far outweigh any potential problems with regard to the plan. The Commission therefore concludes that adoption of the "TDS T+" plan as filed by the Company is in the

public interest.

S.C. Code Ann. §58-3-140(A) (Supp. 1993) designates that this Commission is vested with power and jurisdiction to supervise and regulate the rates and service of every public utility in this State and to fix just and reasonable standards, classifications, regulations, practices, and measurements of service to be furnished, imposed, or observed, and followed by every public utility in this State." S.C. Code Ann. §58-3-140 (A) (Supp.1993).

Additionally, although telephone utilities may not grant unreasonable preferences or advantages, "[s]ubject to the approval of the Commission, ..., telephone utilities may establish classifications of rates and services and such classifications may take into account the conditions and circumstances surrounding the service, such as time when used, the purpose for which used, the demand upon plant facilities, the value of the service rendered or any other reasonable consideration. The Commission may determine any question arising under this section." S.C. Code Ann. §58-9-250 (1976) (emphasis added).

TDS Telecom has filed the "TDS T+" plan under the local, rather than toll, section of its General Customer Services Tariff. The Commission finds that this traffic should be reclassified as local rather than toll traffic. Consequently, with approval as granted herein, the "TDS T+" plan is a local service.

3. The Commission concludes that the "TDS T+" plan will benefit the customers and, therefore, approval is in the public interest. Since the plan is optional, it will serve those customers who wish to utilize the plan but will not burden those

customers who either have no desire or no need to use the plan.

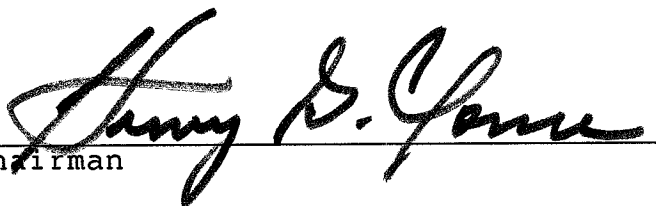
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. The "TDS T+" plan should be approved as filed.

2. TDS Telecom and its South Carolina companies of McClellanville, Norway, St. Stephen, and Williston shall maintain records which will show the revenue effect of their participation in the Area Calling Plan Principles Agreement on their revenue requirement and the revenue requirement of other LECs which terminate Area Calling Plan-type calls in their service area. The records shall also include the amount of terminating carrier common line charges avoided as a result of the Area Calling Plan Principles Agreement.

3. This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

  
Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Executive Director

(SEAL)